THE BIG BOOK OF PHRASAL VERBS IN USE

DIALOGUES, DEFINITIONS & PRACTICE FOR ESL/EFL STUDENTS

JACKIE BOLEN

Also by Jackie Bolen

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The Big Book of Phrasal Verbs in Use:

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Jackie Bolen

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Table of Contents

Introduction....4
About the Author: Jackie Bolen....5
Goofing Around....6
Work Something Out....8
Ask Out....10
Beef Up....12
Come Through....14
Back Down....16
Brush Up....18
Wrap Up....20
Break Up....22
Bump Into 24
Break Down....26
Dry Up....28
Give Away....30
Break Off....32
Zip Up....34
Bring On....36
Burn out....38
Cheer on 40
Ask for 42
Burning Up....44
Wake Up....46
Clog Up....48
Wiped Out....50
Burn Down....52
Come In....54
Track Down....56
Break Through....58
Before You Go....60

Introduction

Welcome to this book designed to help you expand your knowledge of phrasal verbs in American English. My goal is to help you expand your vocabulary and to be able to speak and write more fluently.

Let's face it, phrasal verbs can be difficult to master, even for the best students. In this book, you'll find hundreds of English phrasal verbs that are used in boardrooms, over a meal, and with friends and family around the world.

The best way to learn new vocabulary is in context. That's why I've introduced each one in a dialogue. Then, you'll find a simple definition in plain English. Finally, there is a practice opportunity so that you can review what you've learned.

To get the most bang for your buck, be sure to do the following:

- Review frequently.
- Use each phrasal verb in real life as soon as possible.
- Don't be nervous about making mistakes. That's how you'll get better at English!
- Consider studying with a friend so you can help each other stay motivated.
- Use a notebook and write down new phrasal verbs (as well as new words, idioms, expressions, etc.) that you run across. Review frequently so that they stay fresh in your mind.

Good luck and I wish you well on your journey to becoming more proficient with phrasal verbs.

About the Author: Jackie Bolen

I taught English in South Korea for 10 years to every level and type of student. I've taught every age from kindergarten kids to adults. Most of my time has centered around teaching at two universities: five years at a science and engineering school in Cheonan, and four years at a major university in Busan where I taught upper-level classes for students majoring in English. In my spare time, you can usually find me outside surfing, biking, hiking, or snowshoeing. I now live in Vancouver, Canada.

In case you were wondering what my academic qualifications are, I hold a Master of Arts in Psychology. During my time in Korea, I completed both the Cambridge CELTA and DELTA certification programs. With the combination of almost ten years teaching ESL/EFL learners of all ages and levels, and the more formal teaching qualifications I've obtained, I have a solid foundation on which to offer advice to English learners.

I truly hope that you find this book useful. I would love it if you sent me an email with any questions or feedback that you might have.

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You might also be interested in this book: Advanced English Conversation Dialogues. You can find it wherever you like to buy books. It has hundreds of helpful English phrases and expressions that can be used in a wide variety of situations. Learn to speak more fluently in American English.

Goofing Around

Andy: How's it going these days?

Matt: Oh, I'm feeling frustrated. My kids alternate between **goofing around** and **beating each other up.** I wish they'd **cut it out** and act normally.

Andy: That sounds tough. They'll **grow up** before you know it though! Enjoy it while they're young.

Matt: I know that but they **wear me down**. I hate **dealing with** their battles.

Andy: Lighten up a little! Let them **battle it out**. I know it's bad but I let my kids **get away with** murder! It helps me stay sane.

Vocabulary

Goofing around: Being silly or joking with someone.

Beating each other up: Hitting or being physically violent towards each other.

Cut it out: Stop doing something.

Grow up: Get bigger or older.

Wear me down: Make me feel tired and weary.

Dealing with: Handling.

Lighten up: Relax; not take things so seriously.

Battle it out: Fight until there's a winner.

Get away with: To do something bad but not receive punishment for it.

Practice

1. I'm not sure you should get in between them. Why not let them _____?
2. My kids _____! I need to take a walk every day to get a break.
3. Hey, stop _____. We need to get some things done.
4. You should _____. It'll be better for your mental health.
5. Kids _____ so quickly.
6. The pen tapping annoys me. Please _____.
7. I know you're _____ a lot right now. Can I help by watching your kids tonight?
8. Do you think we can _____ it? I'm worried that we won't.
9. My cat and dog love _____.

Answers

1. battle it out
2. wear me down
3. goofing around
4. lighten up
5. grow up
6. cut it out
7. dealing with
8. get away with
9. beating each other up

Work Something Out

Kari: Hi, I'd like to **trade in** this car if possible and upgrade to a better one.

Jen: I'm sure we could **work something out**. Can I **point out** some of the options for new cars?

Kari: Hang on. You can maybe **talk me into** a new car but I have to **stick to** my budget pretty strictly so it would have to be a cheaper one.

Jen: Sure, let's have a **look around**. Why don't you **think about** a Kia? I could **go down** a bit on price if your old car is in reasonable shape.

Vocabulary

Trade in: Exchange something old, usually for a newer thing.

Work something out: Make a deal.

Point out: Highlight or feature.

Hang on: Wait.

Talk me into: Convince.

Stick to: Not cheat (a diet), not exceed (a budget), etc.

Look around: Check out the items or a location.

Think about: Consider.

Go down: Reduce.

Practice

1. Can you come back in a few minutes? I'd like to have a _____ first.
2. I'd like to _____ all the features.
3. Are you able to _____ on price at all? It's just above my budget.
4. It's so hard to _____ my diet around Christmas.
5. Can you please give me some time to _____ that? I'm not sure where I'll be next year.
6. I think you could _____ getting that game console for the kids.
7. I'm sure we could _____ to compensate you for all this extra time that you're working.
8. _____ a second. I'd like to take a closer look at the contract before I sign in.
9. I'd like to _____ this phone for a newer one, please.

Answers

1. look around
2. point out
3. go down
4. stick to
5. think about
6. talk me into
7. work something out
8. hang on
9. trade in

Ask Out

Cayla: So, I'm thinking about **asking out** Jenny. Do you remember her? She was at my Christmas party last year.

Kenny: Oh yeah. Well, **call her up** and **go for it**! **Go after** what you want.

Cayla: Do you think I'll **come across** as too forward? Or that she'll **blow me off**?

Kenny: I don't think so. She already knows you! Don't **chicken out**. And **check in** with me after you do it. I want to know how it **turned out**.

Vocabulary

Asking out: Inviting someone to go on a date.

Call her up: Phone her.

Go for it: Encouraging someone to do something.

Go after: Pursue someone or something.

Come across: Give an impression.

Blow me off: Not pay attention to; disregard.

Chicken out: Not do something due to nervousness.

Check in: See how someone is doing.

Turned out: Finding out the final result of something.

Practice

1. That _____ terribly. I'm so disappointed.
2. Why don't you _____? It's better than obsessing about it.
3. I think he's going to _____ again. I'm so tired of dealing with him.
4. Please _____ with your Mom. I think she's having a difficult time lately.
5. I don't want to _____ badly but I think I need to resign from this position.
6. You should _____. You'd do a great job as coach!
7. If you want a good job, you have to _____ it. It won't just fall into your lap.
8. I'm nervous about _____ Jill. Do you think she'll say yes?
9. It's okay if you _____. I know it's a big thing to do.

Answers

1. turned out
2. call her up
3. blow me off
4. check in
5. come across
6. go for it
7. go after
8. asking out
9. chicken out

Beef Up

Tim: I think we need to **beef up** our cybersecurity. We're starting to **fall behind** and I'm nervous we might **end up** getting hacked.

Nathan: I agree. It's time to **break out** all the tools I think. I'd rather do some prevention now if it means we don't have to **fight back** against some unknown enemy later.

Tim: I agree. Let's **get it over with**. We have to do it at some point and better late than never.

Nathan: For sure. But, we can't get **carried away** with it. We still have to **stay within** the budget. Let's **hit up** Tony and see what he thinks about this. He's the head of security here.

Vocabulary

Beef up: Increase.

Fall behind: Not keep up to others.

End up: To be in a place that was not planned for in the end.

Break out: Deploy or start to use something.

Fight back: Counterattack in a fight or battle.

Get it over with: Do something that you don't want to do.

Carried away: Do something to an excessive degree.

Stay within: Not go over budget or time; not exceed some limit.

Hit up: Ask someone for something, usually a favour.

Practice

1. We need to _____ the schedule time for this meeting. I have a dentist appointment after it.
2. I don't want to _____ being stuck next to him at lunch.
3. We're starting to _____ on this project. Let's stay late tonight and tomorrow and try to get back on track.
4. Let's _____ against Tim about this decision. It's clearly the wrong one for our company.
5. My kids always get _____ with games and never clean up!
6. Let's _____ your parents and see if they'll take us out for dinner tonight.
7. Let's _____ that wine you made. I think it's ready.
8. Cleaning the garage this weekend? I don't want to but let's _____.
9. Let's _____ our home security system. There have been a lot of break-ins recently.

Answers

1. stay within
2. end up
3. fall behind
4. fight back
5. carried away
6. hit up
7. break out
8. get it over with
9. beef up

Come Through

Ethan: Do you think Bob is going to **come through** for us?

Allen: I don't want to **rule him out** but he is known to **fall apart** under pressure. He's for sure going to **screw up**.

Ethan: Hey, don't **hold back** what you think! I **look forward to** seeing what he can do.

Allen: You can **dress it up** all you want but the fact is that he's terrible at his job.

Ethan: Slow down. Don't **get ahead of yourself.** Let's be open-minded and see what he can do.

Vocabulary

Come through: Succeed at doing something.

Screw up: Not do something successfully.

Rule him out: To eliminate, cancel, or discount someone.

Fall apart: Break down.

Hold back: To not say or do something that you want to do.

Look forward to: Await something eagerly.

Dress it up: Present or show something to be better than it is.

Slow down: Don't move so quickly.

Get ahead of yourself: Look too far ahead; not focus on the initial things.

Practice

1. Don't ____. First things first.
2. Did he _____ again? That guy just can't get things right.
3. He's going to _____ for us. He always does.
4. Let's ____. I can't keep up this pace for the whole hike.
5. Let's _____ for a minute. I want to let them make the first move.
6. That company always seems to _____ when it counts. I'm not sure how much longer they'll be around.
7. You can _____ all you want but it's not going to change the fact that he's a terrible boss.
8. I _____ the day when my kids go back to school! I need some peace and quiet.
9. Please don't _____. He'll make an excellent employee.

Answers

1. get ahead of yourself
2. screw up
3. come through
4. slow down
5. hold back
6. fall apart
7. dress it up
8. look forward to
9. rule him out

Back Down

Candice: I'm not going to **back down** here. It **boils down to** this—we need to fire Tony.

Tracy: Calm down. We're going to **get through** this without firing anybody.

Candice: At the very least, we need to **call in** the experts. We're not equipped to handle this.

Tracy: Why don't you take a day to **cool off**? We need to **get back to** work and keep at it. We'll **figure this out.** We've **run into** problems like this before.

Vocabulary

Back down: Let up; not fight someone.

Boils down to: Summarize something.

Calm down: Relax; chill out.

Get through: Overcome a difficult situation.

Call in: Ask for help from someone.

Cool off: To calm down after getting agitated or angry.

Get back to: Start again; reply to a phone message or email.

Figure this out: Solve a problem.

Run into: See or encounter someone you have previously met.

Practice

1. I think we can _____ if we put our minds to it.
2. My son never wants to _____ and we fight to the death!
3. I hope we don't _____ Todd again. That guy is so loud.
4. Let's try to ____. I think it won't seem so bad in the morning.
5. It's time to _____ the big dogs. The guys we have just aren't getting the job done.
6. I hope that we can _____ our project soon. I hate having to deal with this other thing.
7. It _____ the fact that I just don't like working with him.
8. Please take some time to _____. We need clear heads to figure this out.
9. We're going to _____ this. I know it seems difficult but we will.

Answers

1. figure this out
2. back down
3. run into
4. calm down
5. call in
6. get back to
7. boils down to
8. cool off
9. get through

Brush Up

Ethan: I'm feeling stressed out. I think I **bit off** more than I can chew.

Jeremiah: Yeah? What's up? Whatever it is, I'm sure that you can **pull it off**.

Ethan: Well, I had to **brush up** on a new programming language for work but I'm not **catching on** as quickly as I usually do. It's starting to **pile up**.

Jeremiah: Don't **freak out**. You're a smart guy! **Get on** it and you'll be up to speed in no time. Soon, you'll be **showing off** like usual.

Ethan: Not likely but thanks for your support. I want to **leave this behind** me as soon as possible!

Vocabulary

Bit off: Taken on.

Pull it off: Succeed at doing something, usually difficult.

Brush up: Refresh; relearn something.

Catching on: Understanding or figuring something out.

Pile up: Not taking enough action so that projects or tasks increase to a stressful amount.

Freak out: Show stress, fear, or anxiety.

Get on: Start doing something.

Showing off: Boasting or bragging.

Leave this behind: Forget about it; finish it.

Practice

1. Stop _____! I already know that you're good at that.
2. If anyone can _____, it's you.
3. Tommy is famous for letting things _____ and then pulling all-nighters.
4. I think she's _____ quickly. I'm so happy with her progress.
5. Can we please _____ us? We keep coming back to it but it's not helpful.
6. Okay, let's _____ it. We have so much to do.
7. Don't _____ about what I'm going to tell you, okay?
8. I need to _____ on my first aid skills for my new job.
9. I may have _____ more than I can chew. I think I need some help with this project if it's going to get done in time.

Answers

1. showing off
2. pull it off
3. pile up
4. catching on
5. leave this behind
6. get on
7. freak out
8. brush up
9. bit off

Wrap Up

Tommy: Okay, let's **wrap up** and **get out** of here. Joe, can you **turn off** all the lights? Kim, please make sure everyone is **logged off** the network and **shut down** all the computers.

Carrie: I don't want to just **stand around**. What should I do?

Tommy: Oh, why don't you **put away** all the dishes in the lunchroom? And then **switch off** the lights in there when you're done.

Carrie: Watch out weekend! Here we come.

Vocabulary

Wrap up: Finish.

Get out: Leave.

Turn off: Stop something from working.

Logged off: When you sign out of your account on an electronic device.

Shut down: Close or stop something.

Stand around: Someone not doing any work does this.

Put away: Make sure everything is in its' proper place.

Switch off: Stop something from working.

Watch out: Look for something; be alert.

Practice

1. Oh ____. The ball is coming right towards us.
2. Were you _____ that account before you left last night?
3. Don't forget to _____ the lights before leaving for work.
4. If you're just going to _____, you could at least hold my tools for me.
5. Let's _____ all the appliances before going on vacation.
6. Did you _____ yet? I'm hoping we can have dinner together tonight.
7. We'll have to _____ the network. We need to do some database maintenance.
8. Please _____ all your toys before bedtime.
9. I'm hoping to _____ for a hike this weekend.

Answers

1. watch out
2. logged off
3. turn off
4. stand around
5. switch off
6. wrap up
7. shut down
8. put away
9. get out

Break Up

Tammy: I'm thinking about **breaking up** with Tony. We **get along** well but he never **calls me back** and I often feel like he's **brushing me off**.

Katrina: Maybe you're just **growing apart**? At least you don't **live with** him. It'll be easier to break up.

Tammy: Yeah, I kind of wonder if he's **cheating on** me? I always feel like he's **keeping things from** me.

Katrina: Who knows. Anyway, it sounds like you're done. Let's go have some beers and I'll help you **get over** it.

Vocabulary

Breaking up: Ending a relationship.

Get along: Enjoying each other's company; not fighting.

Calls me back: Returns phone calls.

Brushing me off: Ignoring; slow to respond to phone calls or text messages.

Growing apart: Having less in common than previously.

Live with: Sharing a house or apartment with someone.

Cheating on: Having sex with another person secretly or without permission.

Keeping things from: Not telling someone everything; keeping secrets.

Get over: Recover; feel better.

Practice

1. I know it doesn't seem like, but you'll _____ it.
2. My coworker and I _____ so well. We're the dream team!
3. I think she's been _____ her husband with Todd.
4. Maybe you and Tony are just _____. It's not a bad thing. It's natural.
5. _____ wasn't the worst of it. They had to sell their house too.
6. I'm not sure I want to _____ someone. I love my alone time too much.
7. Do you think he's _____? I'm not sure. Maybe he's just busy.
8. I'm wondering if he's _____ me. I just have a weird feeling about it.
9. My son never _____. I'm thinking about making him pay his own phone bill!

Answers

1. get over
2. get along
3. cheating on
4. growing apart
5. breaking up
6. live with
7. brushing me off
8. keeping things from
9. calls me back

Bump Into

Jeremy: Hey, guess who I **bumped into** today at Starbucks?

Owen: Who?

Jeremy: Tony. Remember him from high school? It **cheered me up** to see him and **catch up**.

Owen: Oh, I see him at the gym all the time and we sometimes even **work out** together. We always say that we need to **get together** but we never **get around to** it.

Jeremy: He seems like a hard guy to **lock down**. He's so busy with his job. Maybe you can **plan ahead** and get a coveted spot on his calendar?

Vocabulary

Bumped into: Saw someone unexpectedly.

Cheered me up: Made me feel happy.

Catch up: Learn what's been happening in someone's life.

Work out: Exercise, usually at a gym.

Get together: Hang out with each other.

Get around to: Deal with or handle something at a future time.

Lock down: Make definite plans with someone.

Plan ahead: Plan something, not at the last minute.

Practice

1. It's better to _____ for retirement than to be stuck without enough money later.
2. Let's _____ next week and talk about this upcoming project.
3. It _____ to hang out with her new puppy.
4. Guess who I _____ at the grocery store?
5. I want to _____ a definite delivery time.
6. I get grumpy if I can't _____ every day.
7. I'm not sure when I can _____ it. I'll have to check my schedule.
8. Let's grab a coffee and _____.

Answers

1. plan ahead
2. get together
3. cheered me up
4. bumped into
5. lock down
6. work out
7. get around to
8. catch up

Break Down

Nathan: I hate to **bring it up**, but it seems like your car **breaks down** all the time. You're going to **wind up** in a tough spot one day without a reliable car.

Rob: I know but you're preaching to the choir. It **comes down to** money. I can't **come up with** the cash to replace it. I'm also surprised it hasn't **blown up** on me yet.

Nathan: I can help you find a better one for cheap. I know a thing or two about used cars.

Rob: Do you **feel up to** it? I'd appreciate your help. I don't want to **get ripped off** again. It's so easy to **con me into** buying a lemon when it comes to cars.

Vocabulary

Bring it up: Talk about something, usually a topic that people avoid talking about.

Breaks down: Something that no longer works; works but not well.

Wind up: To end up in a certain situation.

Comes down to: Finding the underlying problem.

Come up with: Find.

Blown up: Exploded; stopped working in a final, decisive way.

Feel up to: Strong, healthy and with enough time to do something.

Get ripped off: Pay too much for something; get something that is poor in quality or doesn't work.

Con me into: Trick or fool.

Practice

1. He always seems to _____. I wish he'd ask more questions before signing on the dotted line.
2. If you car _____, please call me, okay? I'll help you.
3. That is what it _____ for me: either he can do the job or he can't.
4. I don't _____ seeing people yet. I'm still so sad about losing my cat.
5. His social media has _____ since he posted that viral cat video.
6. If you _____ coming to Vancouver, please give me a call.
7. It's difficult to _____ enough money for a down payment on a house.
8. Please don't _____ doing something I don't want to do! It always happens when we go out drinking.
9. I hate to ____, but you've been late for work these past three days. What's up?

Answers

1. get ripped off
2. breaks down
3. comes down to
4. feel up to
5. blown up
6. wind up
7. come up with
8. con me into
9. bring it up

Dry Up

Karen: All my contracts seems to have **dried up.** Have you heard of any work?

Ellie: What about that job you **applied for**? Did you **follow up** with them?

Karen: Their funding **fell through** in the end and they didn't hire anyone.

Ellie: Oh, I didn't know about that. Do you want to **stick with** this industry or are you **open to** other possibilities? You might be able to **fill in** for a position at my company. Someone is going on maternity leave.

Karen: I'd **settle for** just about anything. I'm about to **give up**.

Vocabulary

Dried up: Ran out.

Applied for: Sent in a job application.

Follow up: Contact someone you've talked to previously about a job, business deal, etc.

Fell through: Didn't work out.

Stick with: Stay with the same thing.

Open to: Willing to consider it.

Fill in: Replace temporarily.

Settle for: Accept something not ideal.

Give up: Stop trying.

Practice

1. Don't _____, okay? Things will get better.
2. If you _____ this, you'll get some good results.
3. Please _____ for me when I'm on vacation.
4. My job offer _____ when we couldn't agree on vacation time.
5. I don't want to _____ the first job offer I get. I have lots of valuable skills.
6. It'd be better if you were _____ working for Tommy as well.
7. The funding has _____ and we'll have to shut this project down.
8. Please _____ with me next week, okay?
9. I _____ ten jobs and only heard back from one of them.

Answers

1. give up
2. stick with
3. fill in
4. fell through
5. settle for
6. open to
7. dried up
8. follow up
9. applied for

Give Away

Ethan: Hey, do you think we'll have time to **get to** the garage this weekend? We've been **putting it off** for months now. Let's **get down to** it!

Candice: Yeah, my only plan was to **check out** that new show on *Netflix*. Let's do it! Maybe we can get the kids to **help out**. A lot of it is their toys.

Ethan: Sure, let's let them **pick out** a few toys each and **give away** the rest. And maybe we can **fix up** that old canoe as well.

Candice: Sure, let me **look into** places we can donate those old toys.

Vocabulary

Get to: Do something you've been waiting a while to do.

Putting it off: Delaying doing something.

Get down to: Begin; start doing something.

Check out: Take a look at.

Help out: Offer assistance.

Pick out: Choose something.

Give away: Donate.

Fix up: Repair.

Look into: Check out; research.

Practice

1. It seems like a good idea. Let me _____ it a bit more first though.
2. Do you want to _____ your own snacks or should I just pack some for you?
3. I'm not sure I can _____ it before I go home. I'll do it tomorrow though.
4. Let's _____ work!
5. Do you want to _____ the new James Bond movie with me this weekend?
6. Let's _____ this old computer for Kenny instead of buying him a new one.
7. I'm hoping we can _____ a lot of this stuff. I'd hate to just throw it in the trash.
8. I've been _____ for too long. It's going to happen tonight!
9. If you want to _____, you could start by unloading the car.

Answers

1. look into
2. pick out
3. get to
4. get down to
5. check out
6. fix up
7. give away
8. putting it off
9. help out

Break Off

Jeremy: Hey, did you **hear about** Tommy and Jen? They **broke off** their engagement.

Cayla: No, I didn't. I'm happy to hear that though. Jen **put up with** a lot of crap. Hopefully, she doesn't **take him back**. I can't believe she **fell for** that guy in the first place.

Jeremy: I know. She sure did put up with lots of crap. Let's see if she wants to **hang out** with us this weekend. As for Tommy, I'd be happy to **cut him off** and never see him again.

Cayla: Same here. I hope that she **settles down** with a nice guy. I hope it doesn't **come out** that they're back together.

Vocabulary

Hear about: Find out about something.

Broke off: Stopped or finished a relationship.

Put up with: Tolerate or endure something bad.

Take him back: Get back together with someone.

Fell for: Fell in love with someone.

Hang out: Spend time with.

Cut him off: Stop talking to someone; stop giving money to someone.

Settles down: Gets married; moves in with someone.

Come out: Something becomes known.

Practice

1. I think the truth is going to _____ eventually.
2. Did you _____ the upcoming merger? It was so surprising!
3. Is she going to _____?
4. I hope that he _____ with a nice woman and has kids.
5. He _____ her so hard. They moved in together after only three months.
6. His family needs to _____. He causes them nothing but grief.
7. We _____ a lot of crap from our boss.
8. I want to _____ with you this weekend.
9. I'm happy that they _____ their engagement. They were always fighting.

Answers

1. come out
2. hear about
3. take him back
4. settles down
5. fell for
6. cut him off
7. put up with
8. hang out
9. broke off

Zip Up

Dad: Hey, please **wipe up** your mess on the kitchen table before you go to school. And **pick up** your clothes off your floor too. I also want to **look over** your homework. Please bring it to me.

Nate: Get off my back! I can't **keep up** with all these things.

Dad: If I didn't **crack down** on you, you'd just **fool around** and be late for school every day.

Nate: Okay fine. You could **lay off** me a little bit though.

Dad: And **zip up** your jacket before you go.

Vocabulary

Wipe up: Clean something with a cloth, usually a spill.

Pick up: Lift something from a lower location; get something from a store.

Look over: Check.

Get off: Stop discussing something; stop hassling.

Keep up: Stay on top of things.

Crack down: Be strict; enforce rules.

Fool around: Be silly; not do what you're supposed to be doing.

Lay off: Be easier on; stop hassling someone.

Zip up: Close with a zipper.

Practice

1. Please _____ your jacket. It's cold out there!
2. I can _____ that report before you submit it if you want.
3. The government is starting to _____ on tax evasion.
4. Please _____ Tommy from school, okay?
5. Can you please just _____ your brother for a bit? I'm tired of the fighting.
6. Let's _____ his back. He's tired of hearing about it.
7. If you _____ and don't get your room clean, you'll have to stay home tonight.
8. I can't _____ with her. She has so much energy.
9. Can you _____ that mess in the kitchen?

Answers

1. zip up
2. look over
3. crack down
4. pick up
5. lay off
6. get off
7. fool around
8. keep up
9. wipe up

Bring On

Natalie: What do you think about **bringing on** a new employee? I'd love for us to be able to **cut down** on our hours. It's too much overtime.

Tom: We should **go ahead** with that. Let's put up an ad and **plan on looking at** resumes next Friday. We can **set up** some interviews for the following week.

Natalie: Sounds perfect. I'd love to **sit in on** the interviews. I want to make sure I **get along with** the new person.

Tom: For real. Let's **lock in** someone better than that last guy we hired!

Vocabulary

Bringing on: Hiring.

Cut down: Reduce.

Go ahead: Do it.

Plan on: Do something in the future at a certain point.

Looking at: Directing eyes towards something.

Set up: Organize.

Sit in on: Join with someone to do something.

Get along with: Not fighting; enjoying each other's company.

Lock in: Secure.

Practice

1. I hope that I'll _____ with my new boss.
2. I'm hoping that by _____ a new person, we'll be able to take all our vacation time.
3. Let's _____ a lunch meeting next week. Maybe Thursday?
4. Do you mind if I _____ this?
5. Let's _____ those tickets. I don't think they're going to get any cheaper.
6. Let's _____ the large meeting room. I think we'll have about 30 people.
7. Please _____ and take care of this for me. I'd appreciate it.
8. What are you _____? I want to see it too!
9. Do you think it's best to _____ gradually or quit cold turkey?

Answers

1. get along with
2. bringing on
3. plan on
4. sit in on
5. lock in
6. set up
7. go ahead
8. looking at
9. cut down

Burn out

Mo: I'm so **burnt out** these days!

Amy: Why? What's up?

Mo: I've had to **care for** my sick mother. When she **dozes off,** I work on **cleaning out** her garage and then I'll get to **emptying out** her storage locker too.

Amy: That's a lot! Does your brother **help out**?

Mo: Not a lot. I don't **hold it against** him though. He has three young kids. He does **run around** on weekends and do errands for her. Lots of neighbors and friends **drop by** so I get breaks throughout the day.

Vocabulary

Burnt out: Very tired from working too hard.

Care for: Look after.

Dozes off: Fall into a light sleep for a short period.

Cleaning out: Emptying.

Emptying out: Removing all the items.

Help out: Assist.

Hold it against: To think badly about someone because of something they did in the past.

Run around: Be busy going to many places and doing many things.

Drop by: Stop by to visit someone.

Practice

1. Why don't you _____ my office and we'll get that paperwork done?
2. Sorry, I can't hang out. I have to _____ and pick up all the stuff for Tim's birthday.
3. Please don't _____ me. I've changed since then.
4. Sorry, I can't hang out this weekend. I have to _____ my little brother.
5. If you're going to be _____ your garage, can you let me know if you have any old canning jars?
6. I'd love to _____ but I'm so busy with work this week.
7. I'm _____ my storage locker. I don't want to waste my money on it anymore.
8. Tim always _____ in my classes. It drives me crazy.
9. I know you're _____ but hang in there until this project is done, okay?

Answers

1. drop by
2. run around
3. hold it against
4. care for
5. cleaning out
6. help out
7. emptying out
8. dozes off
9. burnt out

Cheer on

Rosie: Hey, are you going to come **cheer me on** tonight?

Carmen: Oh yeah, you can **count on** me. I'll have to **sneak out** of work early though!

Rosie: Thanks for your support. You've always **believed in** me.

Carmen: Do you think you'll **get in** the game tonight?

Rosie: I should be able to. A couple of people are injured. **Look out** world!

Carmen: To tell you the truth, I find it difficult to **tell everyone apart**. What's your number again?

Rosie: 17.

Carmen: Cool. Well, **eat up** and get some energy. And **keep on** them tonight, okay?

Vocabulary

Cheer me on: Support at a competition or game.

Count on: Depend on.

Believed in: Thought that someone could accomplish their goal.

Get in: Play.

Sneak out: Secretly leave.

Look out: Watch.

Tell everyone apart: Distinguish between people.

Eat up: Finish your meal.

Keep on: Don't give up.

Practice

1. Let's _____ him about his chores, okay?
2. You know that you can always _____ me, right?
3. Please _____ for him. He's smaller than most of the other dogs.
4. I'd like to _____ a workout today if I can.
5. Can you _____ tonight? Meet me behind the school at midnight.
6. _____. It's time to go to school.
7. It's difficult to _____ when watching a soccer game.
8. My mom always _____ me when I was growing up.
9. Come _____ tonight if you have time. I'd love to see you there.

Answers

1. keep on
2. count on
3. look out
4. get in
5. sneak out
6. eat up
7. tell everyone apart
8. believed in
9. cheer me on

Ask for

Lenny: How are things going at work?

Carmen: Terrible! We can't **carry on** working so much. So many of us are **coming down with** serious health problems due to stress.

Lenny: Hold on. Can you **cut back** on the hours and **stand up for** yourself? That sounds ridiculous.

Carmen: I'd love to **do away with** all the OT but we've **asked for** that exact thing and been told that it's too busy. And that's not the worst of it—it's that they won't **pay up** when it comes to bonus time.

Lenny: Wow, I could certainly **do without** that crap. Are you **planning on** looking for a new job?

Vocabulary

Carry on: Continue.

Coming down with: Getting sick.

Hold on: Wait.

Cut back: Reduce.

Stand up for: Support something.

Do away with: Stop something.

Asked for: Requested.

Pay up: Pay a bill or obligation that has come due.

Do without: Not have something.

Planning on: Intending to do something.

Practice

1. You want me to work late tonight? I was _____ taking my daughter to her soccer practice.
2. I think you'd get what you want if you _____ it.
3. I can certainly _____ his bad attitude.
4. Just _____ a minute! I can come up with the answer myself if you wait.
5. He should _____ for himself and not let his boss get away with that.
6. Please _____ with what you're doing. It looks great.
7. It's time for that company to _____ for all those warranty claims.
8. I think I'm _____ a cold.
9. I'd love to _____ on how much I drink but it's difficult around the holiday season.

Answers

1. planning on
2. asked for
3. do away with/do without
4. hold on
5. stand up for
6. carry on
7. pay up
8. coming down with
9. cut back

Burning Up

Dad: Hey Jimmy, you don't look great. Are you **coming down with** something? Let me feel your forehead.

Jimmy: Dad! I feel fine.

Dad: You're **burning up**. We'll have to **call off** that birthday party of yours tomorrow. **Go back** to bed. And **stay off** electronics for the entire day. And don't **monkey around with** your new puppy. You need rest.

Jimmy: Dad, no! I'm okay. I don't want to **lie around** all day. And I for sure want to have my party tomorrow.

Dad: I told you this would happen if you kept **staying up** late playing video games. You're **run down**.

Vocabulary

Coming down with: Getting sick.

Burning up: Having a fever.

Call off: Cancel.

Go back: Return to somewhere you previously were.

Stay off: Not use.

Monkey around with: Play with; fool around.

Lie around: Be lazy in bed or on the couch.

Staying up: Not going to bed, usually late at night.

Run down: Not in the best of health due to working too much, staying up late, etc.

Practice

1. I'm starting to get _____. Something has to give.
2. Why don't you _____ to school? You could get a much better job.
3. Hey, you're _____. I'll make a doctor's appointment for you.
4. Why are you _____ so late? You look exhausted.
5. Please _____ electronics in the mornings. I just got a call from your principal that you're always late for school.
6. I hope I'm not _____ that cold that my son had.
7. I love to _____ on rainy weekends.
8. My kids love to _____ with the neighbor kids after school.
9. Let's _____ that meeting. I think we've already solved the issue.

Answers

1. run down
2. go back
3. burning up
4. staying up
5. stay off
6. coming down with
7. lie around
8. monkey around with
9. call off

Wake Up

Mom: Hey, **wake up** Jenny. I'm going to **turn on** the lights.

Jenny: Mom! Stop **picking on** me.

Mom: I'm certainly not. Don't **take it out on** me that you stayed up too late last night. I hate **starting off** the day like this too.

Jenny: Arghhh.

Mom: You need to **print off** your homework and **make up** your lunch before you go to school. **Hurry up**. You don't have a lot of time. I need to **head for** work now.

Vocabulary

Wake up: Open your eyes after sleeping.

Turn on: Switch on something (lights, electronic device, etc.).

Picking on: Bullying.

Take it out on: Blaming someone wrongly for something you're angry about.

Starting off: Beginning.

Print off: Use a computer printer to print a document.

Make up: Put together; assemble.

Hurry up: Go quickly because time is running out.

Head for: Go to somewhere.

Practice

1. Tony! _____. You're going to be late for school.
2. My teacher gets frustrated so easily and loves to _____ Matt. It's just not fair.
3. Please _____ your room before you go to school. It's a disaster.
4. I want to _____ work before 8:00 tomorrow. Traffic is so bad after that.
5. Our train is at 9:30 so let's _____ at 7:30.
6. I hate _____ the day without coffee first.
7. Please _____ your computers and let's get started.
8. I want to _____ my ticket. Can I do that here?
9. Stop _____ your sister! I'm so tired of it.

Answers

1. hurry up
2. take it out on
3. make up
4. head for
5. wake up
6. starting off
7. turn on
8. print off
9. picking on

Clog Up

Andy: Hey Nicole. The drain is **clogged up** again with your long hairs. You're not **holding up** your end of the bargain. Remember? You promised to clean the sink and I promised to **knock off** the late night video gaming.

Nicole: Oh, **come off it**. It's not a big deal. I could **do with** you not hassling me all the time.

Andy: You **went back on** your word! I **carried out** my end of the deal. You **let me down**.

Nicole: Okay, you're right. I **messed up** and I'm sorry. I'll pay more attention to it.

Vocabulary

Clogged up: Blocked.

Holding up: Doing something you promised.

Knock off: Stop.

Come off it: Stop saying something silly or ridiculous.

Do with: Get something you want.

Went back on: Didn't follow through; broke a promise.

Carried out: Did something as promised.

Let me down: Disappointed me.

Messed up: Did something incorrectly.

Practice

1. Sorry. I _____ on that project. I'll do my best to fix it.
2. He _____ his word—I was so disappointed in him.
3. He's famous for not _____ his end of the deal. Such a sketchy guy.
4. I have a feeling he's going to _____ in the end but so far, so good.
5. I could _____ a cup of tea.
6. The drain is _____ again. Could you please take a look at it?
7. He _____ each task efficiently and under budget.
8. Oh, _____. That's not what happened.
9. Please _____ all the swearing around Jamie, okay? I don't want her to hear that stuff at home.

Answers

1. messed up
2. went back on
3. holding up
4. let me down
5. do with
6. clogged up
7. carried out
8. come off it
9. knock off

Wiped Out

Jeremy: Doug? Are you okay?

Doug: I **wiped out** on my bike. I **ran over** a tree root and went over the handlebars. I thought it was just some dirt and I tried to **wash it off** but it **turned out** to be a big cut.

Jeremy: You **lucked out**. It could have been way worse. How was the bike?

Doug: I had to **take apart** the front wheel and then **straighten out** the rim. But, we're both going to **pull through**. You can't **keep us down**!

Vocabulary

Wiped out: Fell off a bike, skateboard, skates, etc.

Ran over: Went over something with a car, bike, etc.

Wash it off: Remove something with water.

Turned out: Proved to be the case in the end.

Lucked out: Something turned out less badly than expected due to luck.

Take apart: Disassemble.

Straighten out: Make straight again.

Pull through: Feeling better, or having a good outcome after a bad situation.

Keep us down: Prevent from advancing or going further.

Practice

1. You can't _____! We never give up.
2. He _____ on his skateboard and broke his leg.
3. My dad is in the hospital but he's going to _____.
4. Can you _____ or is it permanent?
5. He _____ and has no broken bones from his accident.
6. Let's _____ this house before everyone comes over!
7. Let's _____ the dishwasher and see if we can figure out what's wrong.
8. I _____ my son's bicycle accidentally. He was so angry with me but I told him to put it away so many times.
9. It _____ okay in the end but I have to confess that I was worried about it.

Answers

1. keep up down
2. wiped out
3. pull through
4. wash it off
5. lucked out
6. straighten out
7. take apart
8. ran over
9. turned out

Burn Down

Sam: Hey, you know that old shed out back that's about to **fall down**? I think we should **clear it out** and make space for a volleyball court back there.

Tommy: Should we **burn it down** or **knock it over**?

Sam: I'd **go along with** either but I do like the idea of **lighting it up**. We could **kick back** with a beer and watch!

Tommy: Will it burn well do you think?

Sam: I'm not sure. Maybe we could **chop up** the wood a bit first and **find out.**

Vocabulary

Fall down: A tree, shed, house, person, etc. collapses.

Clear it out: Remove.

Burn it down: Burn something until there's nothing left.

Knock over: Make something fall by using force.

Go along with: Agree with.

Lighting it up: Burning it.

Kick back: Relax.

Chop up: Use an axe or knife to make something smaller (wood, vegetables, etc.)

Find out: Discover; see the results.

Practice

1. Let's _____ what time your soccer game is.
2. That room? Let's _____ and make space for a home office.
3. Please _____ these veggies and put them in the soup.
4. I want them to _____ that old house. It's such an eyesore.
5. Let's _____ with a beer. I'm so tired.
6. Let me know when you're _____. I'd like to see it.
7. That cake looks kind of unstable. Is it going to _____?
8. This house! I wish we could just _____. It's so messy.
9. I'm happy to _____ with whatever. I'm flexible.

Answers

1. find out
2. clear it out
3. chop up
4. knock over
5. kick back
6. lighting it up
7. fall down
8. burn it down
9. go along with

Come In

Kendra: Hey, **come in** and **sit down**. What's up?

Ethan: I'm hoping to **sort out** that issue Ted and I had.

Kendra: Sorry to **cut in**. But, please **hold off** on telling me more. I've heard enough. I've already told you guys to **stay out** of each others' business.

Ethan: Okay, but he keeps **putting me down**.

Kendra: Stop. I'm tired of you two **telling on** each other. Just **stay away** from each other and we'll try to arrange for you to be put on separate sides of the office.

Vocabulary

Come in: Enter

Sit down: Have a seat in a chair or on a couch.

Sort out: Come to an understanding about something.

Cut in: Stop someone from talking before they were finished.

Hold off: Wait.

Stay out: Not go somewhere.

Putting me down: Insulting.

Telling on: Tattling; complaining about something someone did.

Stay away: Not get near.

Practice

1. Please _____from your brother. He's grumpy right now.
2. Can I _____ before you say more? I already know this information.
3. Please _____ of my office until I invite you in.
4. Can I ____? I'd like to talk to you about something.
5. She's always _____ her brother and it's starting to get very annoying.
6. Please _____ on working overtime on this project. We don't have the budget to pay for it.
7. Would you like to _____?
8. My boss keeps _____ in subtle ways. I don't know how long I can stay at that place.
9. I'm hoping that we can _____ this conflict we're having.

Answers

1. stay away
2. cut in
3. stay out
4. come in
5. telling on
6. hold off
7. sit down
8. putting me down
9. sort out

Track Down

Police officer #1: I think we should **turn up** the heat on this guy. I'm sure he'll **turn over** his accomplice. Or, at least help up **track him down**.

Police officer #2: I think you're right. He's already told us enough to **narrow down** the search. I was just about to **punch out** but I'll **stick around** for a bit.

Police officer #1: Okay, do you want to question him this time? I'll **back off** for now. But, don't **let up** too much.

Vocabulary

Turn up: Increase.

Turn over: Give something up.

Track him down: Find him.

Narrow down: Eliminate some possible options.

Punch out: Finish work for the day.

Stick around: Stay.

Back off: Draw back.

Let up: Reduce or lessen whatever you're doing.

Practice

1. Don't _____ on him, okay? He's just starting to brush his teeth without us telling him every single time.
2. Let's _____ the oven. I want it to cook quickly. I'm so hungry.
3. I know you want to _____ but there are still a couple more things to do.
4. Let's _____ so we can find out why he's missed so much school.
5. Please _____. I know you're trying to help but I don't want to hear it anymore.
6. I'm hoping to _____ the choices online first so we don't waste so much in the store.
7. We have to _____ the keys next Friday.
8. Let's _____ until the end and see if there's any leftover alcohol we can take home.

Answers

1. let up
2. turn up
3. punch out
4. track him down
5. back off
6. narrow down
7. turn over
8. stick around

Break Through

Jerry: How's your thesis going?

Athena: I had a big **break through**. I'm planning to **hand it in** next month.

Jerry: Wow! That's great news. It was **hanging over** your head for so long. What did you **come up with**?

Athena: I'll **spare you** the boring details! But, I'm going to **make for** the mountains and **rip up** the slopes for a few days when it's done. That's the exciting news.

Jerry: I'll have to **see about sneaking in** a few days myself. I heard there was a big dump of snow last week.

Vocabulary

Break through: Achieve some success at something, usually after a difficult period of time.

Hand it in: Turn something in to a boss or teacher.

Hanging over: Feeling upset or worried about something.

Come up with: Discover; figure out.

Spare you: Save from dealing with or hearing about.

Make for: Go to.

Rip up: Do a sport enthusiastically (skiing, snowboarding, skateboarding).

See about: Look into something.

Sneaking in: Being able to do something even though you're busy; go someplace you're not supposed to go.

Practice

1. I think someone is _____ here at night. Some things are in different spots each morning.
2. What did you _____?
3. I'll have to _____ that vacation request. I'm not sure what our staffing needs are yet.
4. I'm happy to _____ the hassle and just do it myself.
5. Please _____ by Friday at midnight.
6. Let's _____ the slopes this weekend! There's 100 cm of fresh snow!
7. He's famous for projects _____ his head for months until he finally gets them done.
8. Let's _____ the mountains! It's such a nice day.
9. We just had a big _____ on that research we're doing.

Answers

1. sneaking in
2. come up with
3. see about
4. spare you
5. hand it in
6. rip up
7. hanging over
8. make for
9. break through

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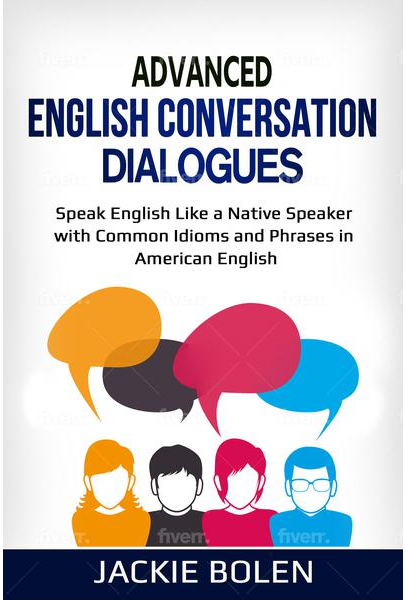

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